

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) will accompany President Obama on Air Force One to the Summit of the Americas in Port of Spain, Trinidad. The summit, which takes place this weekend, brings together leaders of Western Hemisphere nations to discuss a variety of issues.

Rep. Farr has traveled widely throughout Central and South America including several trips to Cuba, a trip with President Clinton to Colombia in 2000, his two-year Peace Corps service in Colombia and more. He is recognized as a leader on Central and South American issues in the House of Representatives.

"I'm grateful for the invitation to attend this historic summit," Rep. Farr said. "We need a fresh approach to the politics of the region, including a comprehensive plan to wipe out poverty and new strategies to bolster the economy. We must also lift our failed embargo against Cuba and expand Peace Corps to every country."

Rep. Farr will depart on Thursday with the president for Mexico City, continuing to Trinidad on Friday. He will return with the president Sunday afternoon. While in Mexico on Thursday, President Obama and his delegation will meet with Mexican President Felipe Calderon and other Mexican officials.

"The United States has an important role to play in stabilizing Mexico, which suffers from too many guns and too many drugs," Rep. Farr said. "I look forward to working with the president to improve our relationships with Mexico, especially along the border. It's a vital relationship for our country, and even more important for the state of California."

Farr's interest in Central and South America began during a summer spent working in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He later learned to speak Spanish at the Monterey Institute of International Studies and spent his Peace Corps years in a poor barrio in Medellin, Colombia.

"My time in Colombia was painful but also fundamental to my growth. While I was in Colombia, my mother died from cancer. Soon after, while visiting me in Medellin, my youngest sister Nancy was killed after she was thrown from a horse," Rep. Farr said. "That

experience made me realize that no one is spared from the culture of poverty when they lack basic necessities. I have worked ever since to wipe out the causes of poverty. I believe everyone deserves an education, access to health care and a secure place to sleep."

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